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LETTER DATED 9 JULY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I wish, on behalf of the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to request that an open meeting of the Security Council be held as soon as possible, preferably the morning of Friday, 11 July 1997, to consider the item, "The situation in Sierra Leone".

The continued deterioration of the situation in Sierra Leone since the coup d'état of 25 May 1997 necessitated the holding of a meeting of the ECOWAS Foreign Ministers at Conakry, Guinea, on 26 June 1997, in order to consider the situation. At that meeting, a Committee of Four, made up of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria, to be joined by the representatives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the ECOWAS secretariats, was formed to ensure the implementation of the decisions reached. The final communiqué of that meeting has been circulated as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/1997/499.

The open meeting of the Security Council would therefore afford the Foreign Ministers of the States members of the ECOWAS Committee on Sierra Leone, who are visiting United Nations Headquarters this week, the opportunity, in an open debate, to express the views of the countries of the subregion on the situation and to appeal to the international community for support.

(Signed) Ibrahim A. GAMBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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